



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
Sept. 30, 2004

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### **Governor Proclaims Booster Seat Safety Month**

BISMARCK, N.D. – Governor John Hoeven has proclaimed October 2004 as “Booster Seat Safety Month” in North Dakota.

“Every child deserves to grow up safe and healthy,” said State Health Officer Terry Dwelle, M.D. “An important safety step is to have children ride in booster seats when they grow out of their child safety seats. Every ride in a vehicle should be a safe ride.”

Because many people are not aware of the safety benefits of using booster seats, children often go directly from car seats to seat belts. Seat belts, which are designed to fit adults, do not fit most children correctly until they are at least age 8. A child who goes directly into a seat belt most often wears the seat belt incorrectly and unsafely by placing the shoulder belt behind the body or under the arm in an attempt to make the seat belt fit more comfortably.

Booster seats, which are designed to help lap and shoulder belts fit properly across a child’s small body, are recommended for children who weigh between 40 and 80 pounds and are less than 4 feet 9 inches tall. When a child sits in a booster seat, it lifts the child’s body up, positioning the lap and shoulder belts in their correct locations – low on the hips, across the chest and off the child’s neck.

To increase booster seat awareness, the North Dakota Department of Health, along with North Dakota Safe Communities Programs, SAFEKIDS Coalitions and local public health units, will host Boost, Then Buckle Days in several cities across the state. At each event, the department will offer free booster seats, fun activities for children and free snacks and will have trained

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technicians available to offer child passenger safety advice to parents and caregivers. The department also will distribute educational materials to agencies that work with caregivers of young children to help spread the benefits of using booster seats. The schedule for Boost, Then Buckle Days is as follows:

- October 14 – Grand Forks
- October 19 – Minot, Dickinson and Fargo
- October 20 – Jamestown and Williston

For more information, contact Carol Meidinger or Dawn Mayer, North Dakota Department of Health, at 800.472.2286.

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**PROCLAMATION  
BOOSTER SEAT SAFETY MONTH  
October 2004**

**WHEREAS**, because seat belts are made for adults, children ages 4 through 8 are safest when they use booster seats to ride in a car; and

**WHEREAS**, children who use booster seats are less likely to be injured in a crash than are children who use only seat belts; and

**WHEREAS**, a booster seat properly positions the lap belt low and snug on the hips and the shoulder belt across the chest of a child's small body; and

**WHEREAS**, children like booster seats because they can see out of the windows better and their seat belts ride where they are most comfortable; and

**WHEREAS**, North Dakotans are encouraged to ensure that children who weigh between 40 and 80 pounds and are less than 4 feet 9 inches tall use booster seats with lap and shoulder belts while riding in cars; and

**NOW, THEREFORE**, as the Governor of the State of North Dakota, I do hereby proclaim October 2004, **BOOSTER SEAT SAFETY MONTH** in the state of North Dakota.

John Hoeven  
Governor